wing of both parties. Rightwingers of both organizations nostalgically look back to the Truman who dropped the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and initiated the Korean war without the sanction of Congress.

The military has all but enshrined Truman in its pantheon of heroes and he is often described for his criminal military intervention in Korea as "gutsy," "spunky," and "decisive" to contrast him to Carter's alleged "weakness," "vacillation," and "indecision."

During his term in office, however, Truman was described by the militarists as being "soft" on communism. The military permitted Joe McCarthy to attack Truman for having inaugurated the "21st year of treason" in the U.S. and the rightwing in the military discreetly stood aside while this abuse was being leveled.

Elsewhere in the world and in the progressive movement, Truman was known as the president who broke the railroad strike, as "Hiroshima Harry," and as the "mad haberdasher." (When Truman was a ward heeler in his home state of Missouri he ran a haberdashery business, none too successfully, until he got higher up in the Pendergast, Tammany Hall-type machine politics.)

New nuclear strategy

As though this bone-chilling revelation was not enough, on August 6 the Carter administration revealed a new nuclear strategy which aims at a first-strike capability against the Soviet Union.

This new military strategy was dressed up in terms of "saving" the cities and industrial complexes in the Soviet Union and "only" destroying military targets and the political leadership of the Soviet Union. It is a sort of follow-up of the "son of Sam" ideology as seen in the Truman memorandum.

The significance of nuclear war is obvious to everyone, even the most unfamiliar. This is just one more attempt to gain a first-strike capacity against the USSR and establish the U.S. world nuclear domination through intimidation.

Why would the Carter administration want to reveal this plan of mass destruction and suicide precisely on the eve of the Democratic convention? In the light of the factional struggles with the Kennedy forces, one answer lies in Carter's efforts to present himself as a hard-liner on so-called national defense and possibly provoke a Kennedy response. Then Carter could have clobbered him by evoking a chauvinist, jingoistic, flag-waving demonstration at the very opening of the convention.

Again, this is a very dangerous maneuver and could easily have blown up in Carter's face when one considers that the overwhelming mass of the population is solidly against any military adventure. At most, the masses genuinely believe, as the militarists do not, that higher defense spending is in the interest of peace, not war. That's the way the people really understand it, which is entirely in contradiction to the way the militarists do.

The development of this new nuclear strategy, it should be noted, has two aspects which can easily be lost sight of if their origin and development is not placed in proper perspective.

Muskie ignored

The press has carried enough stories to show that Secretary of State Edmund Muskie learned of the Carter administration decision to revise its nuclear war strategy only when he read reports about it in the next day's newspapers.

After all the buildup Muskie got as a replacement for Cyrus Vance, who resigned in protest of the new adventurism of the Carter administration, it was assumed and well-cultivated in the press that "Big Ed Muskie" would be a tough guy against the militarist element in the administration, as represented by National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and the Pentagon, and that Muskie would be number one on important foreign policy decisions.

What could be more important in foreign policy formulation than a new threatening and exceptionally dangerous military strategy which could end up in a holocaust on a planetary scale? Nevertheless, Muskie was excluded from participation or consultation about this military thrust.

One may ask why he didn't resign pronto as did Vance. The answer is illuminating in the extreme. Vance, a top-notch Wall Street lawyer with many giant corporate clients (including the *New York Times*) went back to his old job. Muskie, a mere politician with limited means, gave up his lucrative job as a senator and was lured in by the military to head the State Department as a front man.

Muskie can't go back to his old job because it is already occupied. Like a toothless dog, he can bark but cannot bite.

The Muskie incident has a singular significance. The virtual ouster of Vance might have been regarded, as it was in the bourgeois press, as more of a change in style than in substance, and that the hitherto dominant influence of the so-called liberal capitalist establishment in foreign policy was still a factor in the formulation of imperialist foreign policy. However, the deliberate and open exclusion of Muskie from consultation let alone participation in foreign policy matters signifies the definitive demise of the more moderate, less adventurous element in the making of U.S. foreign policy. [See *Generals over the White House* by Sam Marcy.]

Not a Carter initiative

It should also be noted that this new Carter administration nuclear strategy is not a Carter initiative.

In the two articles that appeared in the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* on August 6, it is clear that while Carter signed the so-called Presidential Directive 59, it was not his initiative. The *Times* article clearly states that, "Mr. Carter, acceding to this [new nuclear] view, signed Presidential Directive 59."

Thus it is clear that it was not initiated by the President nor was it worked out with the so-called coordinate or constitutional arm of the executive branch of the government, that is, the State Department. The conclusion is inescapable. This was a decision carefully worked out by the criminal military, of which Carter, of course, is an accomplice.

How is it possible to unload such blood-curdling monstrosities on the people without it evoking a firestorm of protest? The answer, in part, lies in the fact that the channels of communication with the masses are completely the dominion of the ruling class which has apparently decided to let the military-industrial complex, its generals and its admirals, have their way.

(The *New York Times* editorial of August 13, 1980, while seemingly speaking out against the Carter administration's new nuclear strategy, is in reality a stroking piece, one calculated to calm the people and the world at large and cosmetically cover the plan while not at all objecting or condemning the substance of it.)

But what about the Democratic convention at which this new strategy was at least peripherally aimed? A Democratic convention is not merely the convention of another political party in this country.

Role of Democratic Party

The Democratic Party, for the most part, has for decades been the majority party in the U.S. It has for many years controlled the majority of mayors, governors, and both houses of Congress. Even during a Republican presidency, it can exercise considerable political sway. It is, in a large sense, **the** representative of the ruling class.

While the Republican Party's social composition, especially in its top echelons, is much more of the ruling class, it is for the most part a socially narrower and politically weaker arm of American finance capital. The Democratic Party is more valuable to the ruling class because it holds in captivity most of the organized labor movement, the vast majority of the workers, and the official leadership of Black, Latin, and, of late, many women's organizations.

Precisely because its holds as prisoner the most viable section of contemporary capitalist society, one must ask how could such a week of nuclear threats, coming in the name of the standard-bearer of the Democratic Party, go without vigorous protest?

How is it possible that Edward Kennedy, the leading opposition candidate for the bourgeoisie in the party, could completely bypass any comment on such life-and-death questions as those posed by the Truman-Carter-Pentagon war orientation as it was unloaded precisely on the eve of the convention?

It is possible because the capitalist politicians are all representatives, in one degree or another, of the constantly warring, predatory interests of individual and antagonistic monopolies and conglomerates which rule over the country and which are flesh and blood of the military-industrial complex. Above all, it is possible because the social system of monopoly capitalism is in extreme decay and, in historical perspective, is convulsed with a crisis involving the destiny of the ruling class as a whole.

The most important lesson to come out of the Democratic convention, despite all the opposition demagogy from the Kennedy forces, is that on all life-and-death questions of war and peace, of unemployment and inflation, this is a party which is completely alien to the human needs and the interests not only of the working class, but of the people as a whole. The unfortunate aspect of this is that so many well-known, relatively progressive people who influence so many millions continue to look to the Democratic Party for salvation when in reality it can only deal out destruction in the coming period.

In light of the latest nuclear threat posed by the administration, the demagogy and hoopla which emanated during the convention speeches cannot be seen as a popular outburst of enthusiasm, such as occurs on a festive occasion. It is rather a ghoulish, macabre dance to the tune of the carnival of the mad haberdasher.

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